

I NEED A FRIEND

A FRIEND- SHIPPING GUIDE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH



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This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. . . .

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

John 15:12, 14

"And again, I say unto you, I give unto you a commandment, that every man, both elder, priest, teacher, and also member, go to with his might, with the labor of his hands, to prepare and accomplish the things which I have commanded.

"And let your preaching be the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness."

D&C 38:40-41

The Call

"Father, you are to take the lead. By working together as families, much great work can be accomplished. With your family, prayerfully select one or two families to friendship. Decide whom of your relatives or friends you will introduce to the Church. Perhaps you could plan a family home evening with them, on a night other than Monday, or participate together in any number of ways. Then, when these families show interest, arrange through your ward or branch mission leader to invite them and the missionaries into your home to share the message of the Restoration. If you will follow this simple procedure, you will bring a number of fine families into the Church."

—President Spencer W. Kimball
*Sharing the Gospel through Priesthood
Missionary Service (filmstrip, 1975)*

Your Missionary Opportunities

Through his prophets the Lord has commanded every member of the Church to be involved in missionary work. Through Spencer W. Kimball, he has given us a plan to help us carry out this responsibility. This booklet provides suggestions on how to respond to his call.

Every member should take the initiative to prayerfully select one or two nonmembers that he and his family can friendship. In addition, nonmembers who are contacted directly by the missionaries need the help of member friends who demonstrate the effects of the gospel in their lives and support the nonmembers as they change their lives. Thus, when the missionaries begin to teach a nonmember, a member will be asked to serve as a friendshipper. If you have been asked to help an investigator in this way, the suggestions in this booklet will also aid you in becoming a friend to the nonmember whom you will be helping.

Although most Church members want to share the gospel with their friends, often they do not know how to begin friendship with nonmembers, or they are timid about discussing the Church with others. The following outline suggests a process by which members can (1) catch the spirit of missionary work, (2) build their confidence, and (3) become fully involved in friendship and fellowship.

- A. Catch the Spirit by Sustaining the Missionary Effort
 - 1. Be a model of righteousness, an example of the believers (see 1 Timothy 4:12-16; 1 Corinthians 9:14; Alma 39:11-13; and John 13:34-35).
 - 2. Fast and pray that the doors (both of nations and of the hearts of men) will be opened (see Alma 6:6; Mosiah 25:11; Alma 31:34-35; and D&C 109:55-57).
 - 3. Support and encourage the stake and full-time missionaries.
- B. Build Confidence by Sharing the Gospel
 - 1. Prepare and encourage sons to serve full-time missions.
 - 2. Provide financial assistance to those missionaries who live in countries outside the United States and Canada by

contributing to the general missionary fund.

3. Share copies of the Book of Mormon with nonmembers.
 4. Share subscriptions of the Church magazines with nonmembers.
 5. Be referral conscious; ask the Golden Questions; and provide the missionaries with the names of nonmember friends.
- C. Become Fully Involved by Friendshipping and Fellowshiping
1. Prayerfully select a nonmember friend or family (or part-member family) who you feel is ready to accept the gospel.
 2. Plan friendshipping activities to interest the family in the gospel.
 3. Ask the family head whether the family would like to learn more about the Church.
 4. Continue fellowshiping those families who become members of the Church.

The rest of this pamphlet suggests ways to become fully involved and to accomplish the friendshipping and fellowshiping phase of your missionary opportunities.

Who Takes the Initiative

The head of the household should lead the family in friendshipping nonmembers. Each father is to "train his family to be a friendshipping family" (see *Annual Guidelines, 1976-77: Melchizedek Priesthood*, p. 2). The ward program should be organized by the ward mission leader under the direction of the bishop.

Who to Friendship

You can friendship neighbors, friends, relatives, new move-ins, newlyweds, new parents, those who have recently experienced sorrows or family problems, business associates, those providing services, or anyone you know or meet whom the Spirit directs you to friendship.

What a Friendshipper Does

1. Arrange activities at least once a month with those whom you are friendshipping. Participate in activities that interest them, such as dining at a restaurant, sharing family

activities (camping, outings, barbecues, birthday parties, their home movies), attending events (neighborhood parties, athletic events, rodeos, concerts, plays, musicals), or participating in sports and recreation (fishing, golf).

2. Report your progress to your priesthood leader each month in a personal priesthood interview.
3. Invite the nonmembers into your home to be taught by the missionaries.
4. Occasionally missionaries will briefly visit you to offer assistance. Welcome them and their advice.
5. Your priesthood leader may arrange to show you the following training filmstrips: *It All Started with Thad*, *I Need a Friend*, and *Sharing the Gospel*.
6. Continually look for more people to friendship. If you find an interested person who lives too far away for you to friendship, obtain a referral card from your ward mission leader, fill in the information, and return it to the ward mission leader. He will forward the referral card to the full-time mission office so that missionaries can be assigned to visit that nonmember.

How to Begin

1. Pray for guidance.
2. Perform an act of service, such as taking the family a loaf of homemade bread, offering to tend the children, giving them a copy of a favorite recipe, baking them cookies or a cake, helping them with home or car repairs.
3. Invite them to a neighborhood party.
4. Take them to a school meeting.
5. Participate with them in community activities, especially when your children and theirs are involved together.
6. Participate with them in community service.
7. Help them when they are in need.
8. Visit those who are just moving in. Introduce yourself and help them move. Invite them to dinner with your family. Give them helpful information about the neighborhood and the city. Let them know that you are interested in them.

How to Develop a Better Friendship

1. Be sincere.
2. Become thoroughly acquainted by learning their names and other important things about them, being a good listener, and discussing their interests. Show interest in them, their hobbies, their work, their children.
3. Be unselfish.
4. Show brotherly love and concern for them. Meet their needs by giving them helpful service.
5. Graciously let them be of service to you when they offer.
6. Smile and be positive.

How to Introduce Nonmembers to the Church

1. Live the commandments. Nonmembers will be motivated by your good example.
2. Invite them to a special family home evening on a night other than Monday.
3. Give them a Book of Mormon.
4. Send them the *Ensign*, another Church magazine, or the *Church News*. Give them a pamphlet or book on a basic gospel subject.
5. Invite the parents, along with some member couples, to your home for a cottage meeting. Be sure the spiritual message is on a basic gospel subject.
6. Take them to a Church social, open house, or auxiliary meeting, or have your children take their children to a meeting or activity.
7. Take them to a sacrament meeting or a special investigator fireside.
8. Show them a Church film or filmstrip, such as *Ancient America Speaks*, *Christ in America*, *Man's Search for Happiness*, *The Bible and the Book of Mormon*, *Meet the Mormons*, or *The First Vision*.
9. Testify to the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ by the Spirit.

How to Start a Gospel Conversation

These approaches can also help you obtain a request for the missionaries from people that you have just met.

1. Has any member of your family ever been baptized into the Mormon church?
2. Have you ever seen a copy of the Book of Mormon?

3. Have you ever wondered whether Mormons are Christians?
4. Have you ever seen Mormon films?
5. Have you ever been in any Mormon visitors' centers?
6. Have you ever been in a Mormon church?
7. Do you know any other Mormons?
8. Do you have a Bible?
9. Have you ever thought about what will happen to your family after this life?
10. Have you ever wondered where you were before birth?
11. Are there any religious questions that concern you?
12. If you were going to join another church, would you consider the Mormon church?
13. Do you know who Joseph Smith was?
14. Would living prophets be important today?
15. Would you be interested in an idea that would bring success to all your family members?

Overcoming Fear

Being well prepared will help you lessen the fear of approaching your nonmember friends about the gospel: "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30). If you are motivated by a concern for them, you will find the time, and you will find the right ways to bless the lives of your nonmember friends. "Now they [the sons of Mosiah] were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble" (Mosiah 28:3). Do not be afraid that they will be offended. Do not be discouraged if they do not respond positively. Continue to be their friend.

Inviting Your Friends to Talk with the Missionaries

1. Ask the questions as soon as you feel that the nonmember might accept the invitation.
2. Ask the Lord to help you recognize the right opportunity for inviting them to hear the missionary discussions. Follow the directions of the Spirit.
3. You might ask them whether they would like

to know about the Church by saying: "Mr. Brown, we enjoy being your neighbors. Would you and your family join us in a family home evening tomorrow night at 7:00 P.M.? Two young men from our church will give a presentation on how our church began." Be sure to give them all the details.

4. Give them a Book of Mormon, with selected scriptures marked and with your picture and testimony attached to the inside cover. Follow up later by talking about what they have read. Then ask: "Would you come to our home for a special neighborhood meeting? Bob and Louise Jones and Jim and Joan Spencer will be there. Two young men will discuss with us how the Book of Mormon was written."
5. You might stimulate their interest by suggesting, "George and Laura, because we think so much of you, we would like to share with you our most prized possession." If they are receptive, share your testimony with them, and discuss some basic gospel principles. Let them know how happy you are. Invite them to hear the missionary discussions.
6. Bear your testimony.

What If They Say No?

Do not be embarrassed if your friend turns down your invitation. The average convert is asked four times before he says yes. He will not dislike you anymore than you would dislike him if he courteously invited you to his home to hear his minister. If he says no, treat this response as you would if he had declined a dinner invitation: "I understand, John. Perhaps some other time." Then continue to be his friend. Asking the question will not hurt your friendship. The Spirit will help you recognize opportunities when it is time to ask again. Do not forget that many will say yes.

Planning and Reporting Your Progress

1. Set a goal by which time you will have the nonmember family ready to hear the discussions. Plan and work toward that date to ask the golden questions. Respond positively when your priesthood leader asks you to set such a goal.

2. List the name of the family head. Be sure you know the names of all the family members and other important details. Select a way to begin friendship and be ready to report your progress to your priesthood leader. (Your priesthood leader may give you a Personal Priesthood Interview Planning and Report Form [PFHT0005] to help you make further plans.)
3. Report your friendship activities to your priesthood leader in a monthly personal priesthood interview. He will report to the bishop.
4. During the monthly personal priesthood interview, your priesthood leader helps you make friendship plans, and he receives from you a report on the success of the past month's plans. He gives you additional training and prays with you concerning the nonmember family. Together you seek the guidance of the Lord.

During the Teaching of the Discussions by the Missionaries

1. It is important that the investigators are taught in your home.
2. Ask the missionaries in advance what you should do.
3. Let the missionaries lead the discussion. They have been called by the Lord and have been trained in their responsibilities.
4. Let the missionaries commit the investigators to hear the next discussion, pray, read, live the commandments, and be baptized.
5. Bear your testimony.
6. Be ready to meet two or three times a week while the discussions are being presented. You may need to sacrifice some of your personal activities.
7. Follow up with friendship visits as advised by the missionaries.
8. Avoid talking about doctrines that have not been presented in the discussions. "And of tenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Savior, and remission of sins by baptism, and by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost" (D&C 19:31).



After the baptism
continue to be their friends.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY
SAINTS